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Psalms of the Sea

By EVERETT BOSTON

The Blind Viking

The blind man stood on the breakwater,
Where the racing tide ripped past.
He heard the scream of a wheeling gull,
And the roar of the rolling surf;
And the wind and the sea were mated in spray,
And the spray kissed the blind man's face.

The blind man stood on the breakwater
Over the sea he had never seen:
His neck thrust forward to the sea
The face of an eagle that had never flown....
The salt ran down the carven lines
In the lean and dripping cheeks.

The wind and the tide and the gulls and I
Saw the blind man go,
Smiling, and proud as a conqueror,
To the death that his fathers died!....
Of the wind and the tide and the gulls, but I
Ever attempted to tell the tale.

Twilight

Oh, the stark sorrow of a city horizon
In the dim glory of the sleepy twilight!
The black silhouettes of futile dreams
Tower in massive shadow,
Lifting hopeless, foredamned arms to God:....
Or brooding down on cheap electric lights
Yellowing the path of scurrying men.

They are not even ugly,
Only pitifully sordid!
They typify remorse that comes too late!

The sea has green eyes; oh, my heart is aching for her perfume!
The sea is a virago; how I laugh at her screaming!
But her twilights promise a new dawn.... I must go back....
There is no peace here!

On Criticism

By WILLIAM FAULKNER

WALT WHITMAN said, among bombast and muscle-bound platitudes, that to have great poets there must be great audiences too. If Walt Whitman realized this it should be universally obvious in this day of radio to inform us and the so-called high-brow magazines to correct our information; not to speak of the personal touch of the lecture platform. And yet, what have the periodicals and lecturers done to create either great audiences or great writers of us? Do these Sybils take the neophyte gently in hand and instruct him in the fundamentals of taste? They do not even try to inculcate in him a reverence for their mysteries, (thus robbing criticism of even its emotional value—and how else are you to control the herd, except through its emotions? Was there ever a logical mob?). Thus there is no tradition, no espirt-du-corps: All that is necessary for admission to the ranks of criticism is a typewriter.

They do not even try to mould his opinions for him. True, it is scarcely worth while moulding anyone's opinions for him, but it is pleasant pastime changing his opinion from one fallacy to another, for his soul's sake. The American critic, like the prestidigitator, tries to find just how much he can let the spectator see, and still get away with it—the superiority of the hand over the eye. He takes the piece under examination for an instrument upon which to run difficult arpeggios of cleverness. This seems so sophomoric, so useless; like the cornetist performing aural acrobatics while waiting for the band to assemble. With this difference: the cornetist gets tired after a while, and stops. The amazing possibility here occurs that the critic enjoys his own music. Do they, then enjoy reading each other? One can as easily imagine barbers shaving each other for fun.

The American critic blinds, not only his audience but himself as well, to the prime essential. His trade becomes mental gymnastics: he becomes a reincarnation of the side-show spell-binder of happy memory, holding the yokelry enravished, not with what he says, but how he says it. Their minds fly shut before the eye-filling meretricity of pyrotechnics. Who has not heard this conversation?

"Have you seen the last.... (suit yourself)? Jones Brown is good this time; he....uh, What is that book? a novel, I think.... on the end of my tongue.... by some fellow. Anyway, Jones refers to him as an aesthetic boy scout. Its good: you must read it."

"Yes, I will: Brown is always good, do you remember what he said about someone: 'A parrot that couldn't fly and had never learned to curse'?"

And yet, when you ask him the author's name, or the book's, or what it is about, he cannot tell you! He either has not read it, or has not only been unmoved by it but has waited to

read Brown to form an opinion. And Brown has offered no opinion whatever. Perhaps Brown himself has none.

How much better they do this sort of thing in England than in America! Of course there are in America critics as sane and tolerant and as soundly equipped, but with a few exceptions they have no status: the magazines which set the standard ignore them; or finding conditions unbearable, they ignore the magazines and live abroad. In a recent number of "The Saturday Review" Mr. Gerald Gould, reviewing "The Hidden Player" by Alfred Noyes, says:

"People do not talk like that. . . It will not do to set down ordinary speech of ordinary people; that would generally be dull. . . To give the deadly detail is misleading." Here is the essential of criticism. So just and clear and complete: there is nothing more to be said. A criticism which not only the public, but the author as well, may read with profit. But what American critic would let it go at this? Who among our literary arbiters could miss this chance of referring to Mr. Noyes as "an aesthetic boy scout," or something else as sophomoric and irrelevant? And what reader could then pick up the book with an unbiased mind, without a faint unease of patronage and pity.... not for the book, but for Mr. Noyes? One in a hundred. And what writer, with his own compulsions to suffer, with his own urge to disfigure paper harrying him like a gad-fly, could get any profit or nourishment from being referred to as an aesthetic boy scout? Not one.

Saneness, that is the word. Live and let live; criticise with taste for a criterion, and not tongue. The English review criticises the book, the American the author. The American critic foists upon the reading public a distorted buffoon within whose shadow the titles of sundry uncut volumes vaguely lurk. Surely, if there are two professions in which there should be no professional jealousy, they are prostitution and literature.

As it is, competition becomes cut-throat. The writer cannot begin to compete with the critic, he is too busy writing and also he is organically unfitted for the contest. And if he had time and were properly armed, it would be unfair. The critic, once he becomes a habit with his readers, is considered infallible by them; and his contact with them is direct enought to allow him always the last word. And with the American the last word carries weight, is culminative. Probably because it gives him a chance to talk some himself.

Dying Gladiator

By WILLIAM FAULKNER

What sorrow, love, that the wind and the raining wake?
Man's life is but an April without a morrow
Between a snow and a season of snow. What sorrow
That winter again about his head must break?

Man's life is short, nor lingers. Gods!
What April knew thee, Caia, in thy young whiteness!
The shepherd lad of thee had a new lightness
To magic him, a clod among other clods.

This was youth, the world a star and a hill:
Rome but an echo, untroubled of us, the immortals;
Torches were less, and trumpets aloft in the portals
Ringing his blood to a flame, that it might spill.

What sorrow, love? Bronze in an age of bronze
And life is but the gesture of a caesar,
Death the mistress that dying, alone, could please her,
Dying, he may force her bastions.

Briefer, love, briefer than all the pain
Of April and youth, are garland and leaf and swallow.
What sorrow, love, that a field for a space lay fallow?
What sorrow, love, for drouth, after the rain?

Two

By FLORENCE KIPER FRANK

Life, it has bound me up with death,
As if two sources gave me breath.

Negation should not ask to be,
Nor feel itself so terribly....

Rendering of me a thing of strife,
In whom Death struggles for its life.

Two Worlds

By J. P. JACOBSEN

Translated From the Danish by Vaughn Meisling

THE SALZACH is no gay river, and on its eastern bank there is a small village which is very dreary, very poor, and peculiarly silent.

On the outermost edge of the bank are the houses, like a miserable herd of stunted beggars whom the water has stopped and who possess no ferriage. There they stand with their palsied shoulders pressed against each other, and pole hopelessly with their rotten crutches in the grayish stream; while their black, lustreless panes, in back of the balconies, look out from under the brows of the thatched eaves, look with a scowling expression of spiteful misery toward the happier houses over there, which, singly or two by two, or in cozy clusters now and then, are spread over the green plain, far, far away toward the golden-hazed horizon. But over the poor houses there is no lustre, only brooding darkness, and stillness burned by sound from the river, which oozes by tardily but never-ceasingly, mumbling to itself on its way —so life-weary, so oddly and absent-mindedly.

The sun was setting. The sonorous buzzing of the cicadas started to fill the air on the other side, and was now and then borne across by sudden faint gusts, which came and then died away in the growth of thin willows on the river-brink.

From up the river a boat came.

In one of the outermost houses a frail, emaciated woman was standing, her figure bent over the breast-wall of the balcony, looking toward it. She shaded her eyes with an almost transparent hand; for up there where the boat was, the sunlight rested on the waters, golden and sharply gleaming. It looked as if the boat were sailing on a mirrow of gold.

Through the clear twilight the woman's waxen face shone as if it were luminous itself. It was perceived distinctly and sharply, like the crests of foam which whiten the waves of the sea even on dark nights. Her despairing eyes peered out with anxiety, a strange weak-minded smile playing about the weary mouth. But the vertical wrinkles on her round, projecting forehead spread over the entire face something like the shadow of the positiveness of despair.

At the little village church they started to toll the bell.

She turned away from the sun, and rocked her head back and forth as if trying to avoid the sound, mumbling almost as an answer to the incessant peal, "I cannot wait, I cannot wait."

But the ringing kept on.

As if in pain, she walked back and forth on the balcony. The shadow of despair had become deeper still, and she breathed hard like one oppressed by tears, yet who cannot weep.

Through long, long years she had been suffering from a painful disease

which never left her in peace, waking or sleeping. She had consulted one "wise woman" after another, had dragged herself from one sacred well to the next, but to no avail. Last of all, she had been with the September pilgrims to the shrine of St. Bartholomew, where an old one-eyed fellow had told her to make a nosegay of edelweiss and wilted rue, of corncobs and graveyard ferns, a lock of her hair, and a splinter of a coffin: this she was supposed to throw at a young woman, healthy and sweet, who was to come to her through flowing water; and the disease would leave her and seize the other.

And now she had the nosegay hidden in her bosom, and from up the river a boat came, the first since the making of the magic bunch. She again stepped over to the balcony railing. The boat was now so near that she could distinguish five or six passengers on board. They looked like strangers. At the bow the boatman was standing, pole in hand, and at the helm a lady sat, steering, with a man next to her, who saw that she steered according to the boatman's signals. The rest were amidships.

The sick woman bent far over. Every feature of her face was strained and eager, and her hand was in her bosom. Her temples were beating, her breathing had almost ceased, and with distended nostrils, with flushed cheeks and wide-open staring eyes, she awaited the coming of the boat.

The voices of the party could already be heard—now distinctly, now like a subdued murmur only.

"Happiness," one of them said, "is purely a pagan conception. There isn't a single place in the New Testament where you can find the word."

"Blessedness?" another objected interrogatively.

"Listen, now," someone began, "the ideal of a conversation surely is to get away from what one is talking about. But that, I think, we can conveniently do by returning to where we started."

"Well, then. The ancient Greeks...."

"The Phoenicians first."

"What do you know about the Phoenicians?"

"Nothing! But why are the Phoenicians always overlooked!"

The boat was now right in front of the house, and at that moment there was one on board who lighted a cigarette. The short flash made the lady at the helm visible for a moment. The reddish light showed the face of a young, sweet girl, with the half-opened mouth happily smiling, and the dreamy expression in the bright eyes, that looked into the dark sky.

The light went out, a little splash was heard, as if something had been thrown into the water, and the boat floated by.

* * *

It was about a year later. The sun was descending among banks of huge, heavy-glowing clouds, which threw a blood-red light on the pale river. A fresh breeze swept along the plain. There were no cicadas, only the bubbling of the river and the whistling of the mumbling fringes of the rushes. Far off a boat was seen coming downstream.

The woman from the balcony was down on the bank.—At the time when she had thrown her magic nosegay at

the young girl she had fainted and fallen to the floor. The strong emotion, and perhaps also the efforts of the new parish doctor had caused a change in her malady, and after a hard transitional stage she had started to recover, and in a few months became absolutely cured. In the beginning she had been almost intoxicated with the sensation of returning health, but she soon started to become depressed and worried, and restlessly despairing. For everywhere she went she was haunted by the image of the young girl in the boat. At first it came to her as she had seen it, young and blooming. It knelt at her feet and looked up at her entreatingly. Later it became invisible, but she knew just the same where it was and that it was there, for she heard it moan very softly, in her bed by day, and by night from a corner of the room. Now lately it had become silent and visible again. It sat in front of her, pale and emaciated, and gazed at her with eyes that were unnaturally large and strange.—

To-night she was down at the river lip. She had a wand in her hand, and was drawing crosses as she walked, cross upon cross in the soft mud. Every once in a while she would straighten her figure out and listen. Then she would go on drawing.

The bell started to toll.

She carefully finished the cross, laid the wand aside, and knelt down and prayed. Then she stepped into the river. As the water reached her waist she clasped her hands together and put herself down into the gray-black stream. It seized her, drew her into the mire, and oozed along, heavily and drearily as it was wont past the village, past the fields—away.

The boat had come quite close now. On board were the young people who had helped one another steer on that earlier occasion. Now they were on their honeymoon. He was at the helm and she was standing up amidships, draped in a large grey shawl and with a little red hood pulled over her hair,—leaning on the short naked mast, humming to herself.

Now they drifted in close to the house. She nodded joyously to the helmsman, looked up into the sky, and started to sing. Leaning on the mast, and with her eyes lifted to the smoothly floating clouds, she sang:

In my grave on the lea
Secure I shall be.
But my joy on this earth—
Has it constant worth?
Is it strong, is it sure
To endure?

Oh, what are those swarms,
Those far-off forms
That I seem to know
As they come and go?

They are thoughts of yore
That once I bore,
When I grieved
And believed
All was pain.

Come ye back to my brain,
Be my guests again,
And sit next to my heart
Ere we part!

Let us drink to Joy ere she was here,
To feeble hopes of yesteryear,
And cheer!

To Carpenters

By JESSICA NELSON NORTH

"Whiten the steeple," drones the solemn bell,
"O Moon, in honor of your Lord and King."
What story might the lofty steeple tell
That craves her whitening?
It stares at heaven with its single eye,
Bearing a golden cross against the sky.

Within the priest in sacrificial dress
Sets out the wine and bread,
Or with his people mumbles formal mass
For one a season dead,
And everywhere that pious human hand
Might zealously embroider or emboss,
On stole and chasuble and chalice-stand,
The cross, the cross, the cross.

Wan features of the young, tormented Jew,
Always before us, stiffening in death,
We have contrived an ornament of you,
Have woven patterns of your thorny wreath,
Embalmed your agony in wood and stone
And made convention of your dying breath.

This is their lot, O Jesus, who forsake
Hammer and chisel and the ductile, yellow,
Firm-fibred wood.
This is their lot who lightly set aside
Moulding of matter and the craftsman's pride.
This is their lot who take
Upon their hearts the pangs of brotherhood,
Who call to fishers by the briny lake
To rise and follow
A dream half-understood.

Bold carpenters of Thought,—you who exchange
Your pine and cedar for the shifting, strange
Timber wherein the living sap still flows,
Mortise your joints and shape your corners true,
Rivet your bands,
Place well your hammer blows, steel upon steel,
Against that final moment when you feel
The nails that pierce your hands.

Cricket

By GORDON LAWRENCE

His face is a Japanese devil in black enamel,
His bulbous eyes the blindness of beaded ebony.
His whiskers are the grass of rich earth; bearded he is and dark, like swarthy Herakles.
His tentacled lips tremble like those of prowling crabs; his corded antennae sweep the ground in apprehension.
Crickets are made of paper and jet and a dab of green jelly;
The females trundle curved spears; the males, drums; they serenade and are happy.
Stiff on their hirsute legs the crickets push through forests of grass stems,
Come face against brother grotesques in the dew showers.
Beezlebub, meditative,
Buts opaque eyes against crawling Lucifer foraging.
Crickets are poreclain lions
Baked to serve secret temples.
Daemons, they are, of the somber earth, with the face of Buddha.
With a grinding of wings they rejoice amid worms and white roots.

Under the prostrate weed, once proud and topheavy thistle,
The cricket is busy.
He gnaws the warm corpse of a friend,
And charges the honeyed night with palpitant music.

Sherwood Anderson and Our Anthropological Age

By N. BRYLLION FAGIN

OF the many things we know about primitive peoples, one in particular is interesting. It is that the first expression of their wonder and ecstasy concerned itself with the outer world in which they found themselves. They, like ourselves, were busiest deriving the wherewithal to exist; and the handicaps they met with provoked their wonder and sometimes their admiration as well as despair. What was this thunder and lightning that frightened away and killed the beasts they needed for food? Who was it that caused the incomprehensible darkness and interfered with the program of their day? Why was it that one, perhaps the least efficient swimmer in the tribe, succeeded in crossing the turbulent river and the other, the most efficient swimmer of the tribe, was drowned? Simple blundering minds, slowly they became populated with spirits and ghosts and phantoms. Back of it all was the urge to understand the world in which they lived. What was this Reality, this earth, this foliage, this sky, the rain, the snow—the innumerable phenomena, mysteriously and hopelessly complicated? We who love to classify say —These people were in a *cosmological* age—an age characterized by an attempt to comprehend the cosmos.

The philosophy of that age, the first philosophy we have a record of, tries to systematize a comprehension of the universe. Thales and Anaximenes and Anaximander and Empedocles and the rest of these first philospohers struggled with the problem of reality. What was the Real? That was their question. Their answer is not as important. Propounding a question is of vastly more significance in the progress of the world than answering it.

The first literature of the world, like the first philosophy, was a cosmological literature. We have epics—a spontaneous cry of primitive hearts and minds, records of adventures in a physical world. We have tales about gods, kind and cruel and wilful; about fates and about monsters. And most of these gods and monsters and fates, if not all of them, were mere personifications of the forces of nature or the physical world with which primitive man came in contact. Max Müller found the names and pedigrees of three thousand Aryan nature gods. These forces man tried to comprehend, placate or subdue. We have stories of heroes who were half gods and half men; we have stories of warfare, legends of valor, and of wandering; we have romances of battle and of the strange spell of different climes and distant places. And then we have dramas of conflict; of the meeting of men and gods and fate. We have a vast cosmological literature—a voluminous record of man's experience in a physical world.

Slowly man evolves. Cities are built and destroyed. Countries are built and

detsroyed. Nations, and even races, bloom and disappear. Empires fall. And the accretion of a heritage of experiences persists. Man decides, wisely or unwisely, that what is real is an unanswerable question. It dawns upon him that whatever the Real may be or whether there be one or not, the fact remains that here he is. He transfers his inquiry to himself. Perhaps he grows tired. The world is too vast, too mysterious to comprehend. Perhaps he learns that the way to understand the world is to begin with himself. At any rate, "Who am I?" becomes the great query of the ages. He begins to study himself, his neighbors; he examines his thoughts, his emotions and their processes. He enters upon the *anthropological* age—the age of man, rather than the age of the cosmos. His art, his philosophy, his literature became anthropological.

It does not really matter just when the transition takes place. We don't know. But we do know that a little Königsberg professor tried to comprehend the operations of the human mind —just what processes are involved when knowledge is acquired. We have his "Critique of Pure Reason." We do know that Dostoievsky dissected the human soul. We have his "Brothers Karamazov," and his "Crime and Punishment," his "Idiot." We do have Emily Bronte's "Wuthering Heights"—a study of passion and longing and suffering and evil and insanity. We do have Flaubert's precise, formful naturalism, and Zola's lumbering, carefully-documented naturalism. We have hundreds of records of humanity examining itself, photographing itself, damning and torturing itself, expiating and pleading for itself. The anthropological literature in all older countries is rich and vast.

In all older countries. But not in America; for America is not an old country; it is just growing old. Up to the very recent present American literature has, with a very few exceptions, been in the main, a cosmological literature. We started with histories of a land which was foreign and unknown to the historian. We had descriptions of a new country by Captain John Smith, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Governors Bradford and Winthrop. We had religious poems and theological dissertations and arguments and homilies—we had discoveries of the only Gods, of spirits and witches.

We had economic reports, inventories and estimates of potential resources. We had a literature of the adaptation, exploitation and effective division of these resources. We had a revolutionary literature—a romantic literature—a paean to the greatness and vastness of a new continent and a free race. James Fenimore Cooper remains to this day quite a faithful recorder of the glamor that even the busy, hardened pioneers may have felt for the strange, mysterious, untrammelled, uncivilized race that inhabited the country before the white man came. Our first poetry of any importance was either theological or nature description. It was either "Thanatopsis" or "To a Water Fowl." It was not a literature of introspection, of deep penetration and analysis; no attempt was made to know intimately one's neighbors.

Slowly, through the cosmological gropings of the American mind, our literature began to become more and more anthropological. Accidents—the queer variations that occur in all races and ages and movements began to appear. Edgar Allen Poe came and was not understood; there was no obvious background for his odd mind and tempermament. (Modern Ph. D. scholars, however have discovered that Poe's "queerness" was due to the influence of "Germanism and gloom"). The transcendentalists came and among them Thoreau, more like a German Max Stirner than like a New England Unitarian. And he, too, was not understood. Yet he perhaps, more than any other in his day, recognized the trend of American development and protested in his ascetic way.

The case of the transcendentalists, however, is not so difficult to understand. What happened in New England before the Civil War is in many respects parallel to what has happened so recently in the Middle West. A period of intense industrial activity. The earth was torn up; the woods were chopped down, the waters were harnessed. Labor came in armies. Industrial hands immigrated; poor farmers emigrated. Factories, railroads, steamboats bellowed and roared. Diamonds and soot. Prosperity and poverty. A reaction soon came—in the hearts and minds of sensitive people. A wave of idealism spread, of social amelioration and reform, of experiment in Utopia. Owenism, Proudhonism, Fourierism, Brook Farmism. Revolt and brooding. Hawthorne trying to puzzle out the workings of "Conscience." Emerson coming to the conclusion that "to be great is to be misunderstood." Thoreau decrying the destruction of his woods.

This note of protest becomes more audible in time. It comes up at unexpected places and unexpected moments, while the main body of our literature continues its original cosmological trend. Whitman comes with his lusty voice and his all-inclusive Americanism and universalism; Mark Twain, with his keen satire tapering down, as a concession to old anticipations and inhibitions, to a mild burlesque; and William Dean Howells gently protests by dreaming of a Utopia, just as Henry James finally protests by running away from America and its rapidly changing aspect to a foreign land and environment.

Of the generation writing today we have the Ezra Pounds and the T. S. Eliots escaping to Europe; while the Dreisers, the Sandburgs, the Masters,' the Franks, the Lewises, the Hechts, the Cabells, the Brooks,' the Menckens, the O'Neills, and the Andersons raise their protest on native soil. Each writes in his own fashion and cries out in his own tones against the narrowness of American life. Some do it artistically and some do it clumsily; some do it with bitterness and some do it with mildness; some curse and some laugh; some scoff and some cry. But all of it is native—all of it is vital—all of it is an expression of a country's need. If the characteristics of this literature are very much like the characteristics of other literatures, it is only because life everywhere has the same characteristics. We have caught up with the world.

Sherwood Anderson's way is the way

of a soft-spoken, tender mystic. His bitterness, if it ever comes upon him, wears off quickly. He tries to understand. His preoccupation lies primarily with people; with what America has done with this great mass of individuals—toiling, struggling, hoping and seeking. There is a vision of beauty somewhere in his consciousness which he sees in the conciousness of his characters. But the vision is obscure—far away and elusive. Dimly it appears in a mystical distance, but the path to it is unknown and blocked with a thousand queer wild growths—conventions, traditions, inhibitions and new confusing forces, large and baffling and depressing.

No writer in our literature represents the anthropological stage of America as fully as Anderson. With him our literature has definitely turned its vision inward upon man. He is interested in outer reality, but only insofar as it affects the people he knows. The motives, the minds and the actions of these people are his field of study. He would get close to them through a study of himself—through breaking down his own isolation, through a subjective projection of life and character.

It is for this reason that all his characters have a kinship: it is his strength and his limitation. His people are obsessed with a yearning to break down the isolation in which they find themselves. All are a bit shadowy, looking with hungry eyes about them, trying to pin somebody, like the Ancient Mariner pinning his wedding guest, to whom to tell their story. Almost every character in "Winesburg, Ohio" comes to George Willard, the young reporter, with a tale which has accumulated through years of lonely brooding. John Webster tells the entire story of his life in one night to his wife and daughter. The usual style of Anderson in most of his short stories is to let someone tell his story to someone. There is a feeling that Anderson is George Willard, the young reporter, sympathetically listening to these stories, mulling them over and over in his mind; that Anderson is stationed behind the door of John Webster's room on that uncanny night; that he is the man who must give expression to the emotions and thoughts of these inarticulate men and women, these adolescents of "The Triumph of the Egg" and "Horses and Men." And hence Anderson himself is frequently inarticulate, adolescent. There is no possibility of clearness, of coherence, where the thoughts themselves are incoherent—without a beginning and without an end. Stunned by years of fear, by years of misunderstanding, by a sense of futility, Anderson is "The Dumb Man." He cries out:

"Why was I not given words
Why am I dumb?

He confesses:

"I have a wonderful story to tell
*but no way to tell it."**

Our cosmological literature has not provided the method for expressing anthropological life. The new artist has to create new methods, and in this respect, too, Anderson is an innovator. Simple people speak simply; and Anderson's diction is remarkably simple. His sentences are short and sharp. Simple people, when they strike a thought which is bigger than they can compre-

*"The Triumph of the Egg."

hend or an emotion which is beyond their experience, are stunned; and Anderson's writing gives that impression. He is baffled, he is stunned. He is groping to express this incoherence which is in the minds of his characters—this chaos against which they are powerless. The very titles he gives to his tales tell the story. "I Want to Know Why," is one; "Unlighted Lamps" is another; "Nobody Knows" is still another. "Loneliness," "Queer," "Out of Nowhere into Nothing," "I am a Fool," "Caught,"—everywhere the baffled expression, the acknowledgment of limitation. And at the same time the urge to comprehend.

There are these titles. And there are special phrases in Anderson's vocabulary—Andersonian phrases and special symbols—Andersonian symbols—which tell the story of his perplexity. Words are, after all, but conventional signs which may and may not transmit a message—depending upon the things to be transmitted. Anderson's words attempt to transmit emotions, fleeting sensations, living thoughts, highly personal nuances of inner experience. They do not always succeed. They come to us distorted with centuries of connotation and association. They are not simple, they are not direct. Anderson struggles with them. He seizes the simplest ones, homely little words, and infuses into them his own fire, his own passionate eagerness. He experiments. He is interested in the experiments of Gertrude Stein. He loves words. "Little housekeeping words, the swaggering street corner words, the honest working, moneysaving words...."**

**Introduction to Gertrude Stein's Geography and Plays.

He repeats words. He pursues, coaxes, caresses, importunes words. He succeeds in conveying to us the beat of his emotions behind the words.

"Something happens" to Anderson's characters. Externally a person may merely lose his job or obtain an increase in wages or fall in love, but to Anderson these experiences have an internal counterpart. More often, however, what happens is obscure, unexplainable, untranslatable, but highly important to the consequences. "Something happened" to the father and mother in "The Egg," "They became ambitious." The heroine in "Out of Nowhere into Nothing" "tried to clutch at something, understand something." Dr. Reefy and Elizabeth Willard were different "but something inside them meant the same thing." His people are clutching at "life," at what is "significant," "meaningful," "important," at the "facts of life." When Anderson fears that he has not quite succeeded in transmuting elusive impressions into concrete meanings he interrupts himself, gives up with a "that's what I mean," or resorts to symbols.

Anderson's symbolic vocabulary is quite extensive. There is the house which represents the human body, the house which sometimes becomes a temple, which often needs a cleansing. In these houses his people dwell, dream, suffer, lock themselves in against the enmity of the town, the world. There is the symbol of hands—Wing Biddlebaum's hands, the hands of the woman who washed Christ's feet, the hands of "A Chicago Hamlet." There is the

symbol of the forest through which Anderson and the shadowy people of his fanciful world grope their way. There is the symbol of voices—strange voices, whispering, talking, calling in the dark. There are the symbols of walls and wells—walls which "men had erected.... about themselves" and deep wells into which "men everywhere (were) constantly digging and digging themselves down deeper and deeper." There is the symbol of the tree. Sometimes it is a young tree choked by a climbing vine; sometimes it is a tree covered with scars but still creeping "toward the top of the wall." There is the symbol of the growing corn, of a marching army, of "Unlighted Lamps," of the figure of the virgin, of dozens of animate and inanimate objects chosen to represent objects, moods and ideas that have their being in the world of inner consciousness.

American fiction, even of the so-called realistic type, has concerned itself largely with superficialities. We have been telling stories of how people walk and eat and sleep and make money and attain a career and become successful. The word "adventure," a very popular one in our fiction, has been restricted almost entirely to physical events. We have had no chronicler of the adventures of the spirit of the inner man. There was no time for him and, to an extent, no need. The spirit was immersed, busy, incurious. To this day the main body of our literature is content to go a-wandering into the Burning Tropics and the Frozen North, into the slant-eyed Orient and the wide-eyed Occident, in search of romantic adventure for the tired subjects of Business. Most of our fictionists, at best, are content with inventorying externals, with "lighting up" objective surfaces. They are ever watchful for "material" —forgetting to look in at themselves.

Most, but not all. Currents flow on steadily, unspectacularly, bringing strange waters sometimes. First one then another of more observing folk become aware of the strange element in the old current. They wonder; they think; they think aloud. They compare the old with the new. They criticize. Self-criticism is the surest sign of the arrival of the anthropological state of mind. It is preliminary to self-examination. Even our inventories have assumed a different form and purpose. "Civilization in America—by Forty Americans," "These United States," "The Mind in the Making," "The American Mind." Have we a civilization? What is it like? What is the state of our art, sciences, politics, literature? What are our States like? On what are based their respective claims to greatness? Why do we think as we do? Are we not oftentimes wrong? Are our thoughts our own? What is this "American" mind? The largely objective studies of Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair, Robert Herrick, and Sinclair Lewis are chapters in the critical inventory of the American scene. They have covered the scene well—and a few other novelists have helped along. It is now time for the second stage: for the subjective inventory.

It is being taken in odd ways. "People are beginning to look in at themselves. They want to know what makes the mental and emotional wheels go round.

They want to find out whether or not they can control the motion of the wheels. It's a turning away from objective group discussion indulged in by the so-called intelligentsia to self-examination. I don't know what to call it. It's not really religious, it's not spiritualistic, it's not psychoanalysis. It's not any of these things pure and simple. It's a straining toward something that is made up of all these factors and many more that defy definition." "Great changes, subtle changes, have a peculiar way of defying definitions, haven't they? What a pity.

Anderson is, thus far, the supreme expression of the anthropological tendency in our literature. He picks up the objective thread and carries it into the subjective realm. His story is frequently an epilogue; it begins with success consummated. In the old sense of the word, John Webster is a decided success. At the age of forty he is a respected citizen, a manufacturer, a husband, a father. This would have been an ideal climax for the purely cosmological story; but with Anderson it is merely the beginning, for it is not the outward things that matter, but the things that take place inside.

From Anderson's point of view, when a man in our society, a man with sensibilities, has attained the goal of his material life, it is time to record his inner life. It is time to inquire into the things that have accumulated somewhere within Webster while he was attaining this position of a mechanical being. Webster realizes that he has missed life; that all along there have lain dormant within him obscure dreams; that alongside of the washing machine manufacturer there has lived a poet in the house of his body. The symbol of the house as a body is here, but it is not with the body that Anderson is primarily concerned, despite the misunderstanding of him and the abuse of critics laboring under the disadvantage of "defying definitions" and lacking the candor to admit it. In the probing of instincts, of impalpable, imperceptible forces, symbols—the recourse of a poet to express a concept in a concrete image become a necessity. Anderson is concerned solely with what happens to the thing that lives within this body, or house. These outward actions—the stream of insignificant detail constantly passing before our eyes —what do they mean? Whence their source? There must be hidden somewhere an incurious retina registering the passing of a different stream, more significant, more important, because more impulsive, undiluted—more true.

Here is Webster, who "for years had been going along, just so, day after day, week after week, year after year, going along streets, passing people in the streets, picking his feet up and setting them down, thump, thump, eating food, sleeping, borrowing money at banks, dictating letters in offices, going along, thump, thump, not daring to think or feel much or anything at all."

But didn't he really feel? Wasn't there a life of emotion and thought going on just the same? Perhaps without his knowing it he had been doing what his daughter Jane had been doing— "spending her entire life in making dramatizations of herself in relation to life."

Throughout the work of Sherwood

Anderson we find this intensification, this going into oneself, this burrowing into hidden recesses of personality. In all of it there is an apparent hunger, almost an ache, to get beneath the mechanical details of outward behavior into the natural, untrammelled life of the soul. It is one way of protest against mechanization, the *reductio ad absurdum* of our industrialization. Combined with this protest is doubtless the ever-surging impulse of the artist, and the scientist as well, to explore the meaning of phenomena. It is responsible for Tennyson's "Flower in the Crannied Wall," and for Whitman's "A child said, 'what is the grass?' " and for Newton's Law of Gravitation and Einstein's Theory. This impulse is ever-present; but it assumes different aspects with different personalities and in different ages. It is regulated by the rise and fall of civilizations; it is behind the "ologies" and the arts.

Anderson's highest expression of inner search is represented by "Many Marriages." In all his previous work there can be traced a gradual passing away from the contemplation of the social scene into the rumbling of individuality. In "Many Marriages" he takes his final leap. The book is grotesque; it has a lurid, unearthly coloring; it has twisted outlines. Everywhere we stumble upon symbols which break under our weight into shadows. It borders on insanity, and logically so; for if the outer life of mere gesture and pretense is sane then what can be said of the inner life of genuine impulse and thought? For "after all, it was quite apparent that the sane people about were not getting such joy out of life as himself (John Webster)," and, besides, perfect sanity, as Lombroso once said, is "a painfully limited, commonplace, and stupid thing."

I am aware, as already suggested, that this anthropological exploration is not peculiar to America; it is going on throughout the world. Europe, with its schools of psychology, its great artistic dissectors of the human psyche, from Dostoievsky to Marcel Proust, has gone a long way in this direction; but in America, so far, we have only in Sherwood Anderson a genuine attempt to lower ourselves into ourselves. Here we have a consciousness that "in every human body there is a great well of silent thinking always going on. Outwardly certain words are said, but there are other words being said at the same time down in the deep hidden places. There is a deposit of thoughts, of unexpressed emotions. How many things thrown down into the deep well, hidden away in the deep well!" Here we have a poetic bitterness against the forces that prevent us from peeping into the deep well—against stultification, against smugness. "If one lived behind a wall one preferred this life behind the wall. Behind the wall the light was dim and did not hurt the eyes. Memories were shut out. The sounds of life grew faint and indistinct in the distance. There was something barbaric and savage in all this business of breaking down walls, making cracks and gaps in the wall of life."

Perhaps we might use John Webster as the symbol of America—America, to whom "something happened." "A lid was jerked off something, somewhere ....Now, you see, I stand as though

on a high hill and look down into a valley where all my former life has been lived. Quite suddenly, you understand, I know all the thoughts I have been having all of my life."

It is a great role that Anderson has chosen for himself—that of a recorder of the hidden thoughts of a nation while it has become yoked to petty tasks. The petty tasks are still here but they no longer seem great. Their glamor, their idealistic halo, has disappeared. The hidden thoughts and the still more hidden emotions rise up to the surface and demand articulation. Anderson's men and women, his adolescent boys and girls, his lonely Winesburgers, Bidwellites, and Willow Springers, turned introspective, demand a cronicling. They demand a sympathetic listerner, recorder, narrator. They demand a Sherwood Anderson.

Whatever ultimate position in American literature Anderson may come to take, his significance as an explorer in the anthropological consciousness of America is clear. He is not merely an imaginative artist working with words and sentences in native rhythms and patterns of life. He is that—and more. He is a social and psychological phenomenon.

Parade

By GORDON LAWRENCE

Of dinosauria,
Of elephants, of shambling Chinese lions,
Of herds of grand and shameful things apocryphal,
And vague, vast hulks of John's apocalypse.
Of eyes that see no more, for that which they have seen,
Of beasts, unformed, whose time is not yet come,
Of all the alligator-gods and sturgeon-gods,
And gods with beaks for noses like Assyrian kings,
And strange, stark kings with tusks and crisped hair.
Of popes, and mitred Heliogabalus,
And eunuchs with great breasts and leaden whips,
And men of stone with yellow shells for eyes.
Of naked queens who pull the chariot,
Their long hair streaming,
In this great triumph for this conqueror,
This so great lord whose face blurs as I gaze
Of recent maids who follow chained and stripped,
Of squatty dragons, hastening now, the crew,
Of elephants,
Of dinosauria.

Testament

By SHERWOOD ANDERSON

One Puzzled Concerning Himself

I had been at the flesh pots, all
night-sitting beside them, walking
back and forth in the moonlight. I
had gourged myself. My body was distended.

I walked home to the city at dawn.
The moonlight was gone.
The streets were empty.
The voice of a drunken man called
from an alley.

I was smug brother to fat men.
I was tired but fattened.
I had been at the flesh pots.

All night the moonlight fell down
like rain on the roofs but I stayed
at the pots, gourging myself.

In the midst of the night as I walked,
feeling myself full and complete,
a child cried and it's little voice,
filled with strangeness in the quiet
place, ran under the low black trees.

The voice found no empty place in me.
There was no vacant place where it
could echo and reecho.
I was full and complete.
I had been gourging myself at the
flesh pots.

Matisse April

By GRACE HAZARD CONKLING

(*Tierra Caliente*)

Nothing can contradict the sky.
The sun has put us under glass.
No pigeons stir, no parrots cry:
A burning brillance gilds the grass
And prints the bougainvillea blooms
On white walls like a calico
Matisse might paint.

Keep all the rooms

A secret. Keep all voices low.
Let even roses be discreet.
Love me and do not tell me so.
Darken your words for this heat.

Release

By EDGAR DANIEL KRAMER

The dark comes falling down,
  As the night grows bitter cold,
And a whisper walks with the wind
  Over the haunted wold.

I open the cottage door,
  And softly you enter in
To sit in the turf fire's glow,
  To warm you from your sin.

The gallows high on the hill
  Is lonely, while you are gone,
And the chains of the gibbet scream,
  Until you come at dawn.

New Orleans

By WILLIAM FAULKNER

Wealthy Jew

"I LOVE three things: gold; marble and purple; splendor, solidity, color." The wave of Destiny, foaming out of the East where was cradled the infancy of the race of man, roaring over the face of the world. Let them roar: my race has ridden them. Upon the tides of history has may race ever put forth, bravely mayhap foolhardily, as my ancient Phoenician ancestors breasted the uncharted fabulous seas with trading barques, seeking those things which I, too, love. Suns rise and set; ages of man rise and joy and battle and weep, and pass away. Let them: I, too, am but a lump of moist dirt before the face of God. But I am old, all the pain and passion and sorrows of the human race are in this breast: joys to fire, griefs to burn out the soul.

But from these bitter ashes which are I, heirs to my pleasures and pains will rise phoenix-like, for the blood is old, but strong. O ye mixed races, with your blood mingled and thinned and lost; with your dream grown tarnished and pointless, knowing not what ye desire! My people offered you a dream of peace that passeth understanding, and arid Syrian sands drank the blood of your young men; I flung you a golden coin, and you purchased martyrdom of Death in Ahenobárbus' gardens; ye took Destiny from the hands of my people, and your sons and my sons lay together in the mud at Passchendaele and sleep side by side beneath foreign soil. Foreign? What soil is foreign to me? Your Alexanders and Caesars and Napoleons rise in blood and gold, shrieking briefly of home, and then are gone as waves hiss curling on the beach, and die. No soil is foreign to my people, for have we not conquered all lands with the story of your Nativity? The seas of Destiny foam by. Let them! My people will crest them, mayhap to be swept like blown trumpets among the cold stars.

"I love three things: gold; marble and purple; splendor, solidity, color."

The Priest

Evening like a nun shod with silence, evening like a girl slipping along the wall to meet her lover.... The twilight is like the breath of contented kine, stirring among the lilacs and shaking spikes of bloom, ringing the soundless bells of hyacinths dreaming briefly of Lesbos, whispering among the pale and fronded palms.

Ah, God, ah, God. The moon is a silver sickle about to mow the rose of evening from the western sky; the moon is a little silver boat on green and shoreless seas Ave, Maria, dream. . . . How like birds with golden wings the measured bell notes fly outward and upward, passing with clear and faint regret the ultimate slender rush of cross and spire; and how like the plummet lark the echo, singing, falls. Ave, Maria. . . .Ah God, ah God, that night should come so soon.

Orion through the starry meadows strays, the creaking Wain breaks darkly through the Milky Way's faint dewed grass. Sorrow, and love that passeth away. Ave, Maria! a little silver vir-

gin, hurt and sad and pitiful, remembering Jesus' mouth upon her breast. Mortification, and the flesh like a babe crying among dark trees. . . "hold my hair fast, and kiss me through it—so: Ah, God, ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon!"

Ave, Maria; deam gratiam...tower of ivory, rose of Lebanon. . .

FRANKIE and JOHNNY

Listen, baby, before I seen you it was like I was one of them ferry boats younder crossing and crossing a dark river or something by myself; acrossing and acrossing and never getting nowheres and not knowing it and thinking I was all the time. You know—being full of lot of names of people and things with their own business, and thinking I was the berries all the time. And say, listen:

When I seen you coming down the street back yonder it was like them two ferry boats hadn't seen each other until then, and they would stop when they met instead of crossing each other, and they would turn and go off side by side together where they wasn't nobody except them. Listen, baby: before I seen you I was just a young tough like what old Ryan, the cop, says I was, not doing nothing and not worth nothing and not caring for nothing except old Johnny. But when that drunk bum stopped you and said what he said to you and I walked up and slammed him, I done it for you and not for me; and it was like a wind had blew a lot a trash and stuff out of the street.

And when I put my arm around you and you was holding to me and crying, I knowed you was meant for me even if I hadn't never seen you before, and that I wasn't no longer the young tough like what old Ryan, the cop, says I was; and when you kissed me it was like one morning a gang of us was beating our way back to town on a rattler and the bulls jumped us and turn us off and we walked in and I seen day breaking acrost the water when it was kind of blue and dark at the same time, and the boats was still on the water and there was black trees acrost, and the sky was kind of yellow and gold and blue. And a wind come over the water, making funny little sucking noises. It was like when you are in a dark room or something, and all on a sudden somebody turns up the light, and that's all. When I seen your yellow hair and your gray eyes it was like that. It was like a wind had blew clean through me and there was birds singing somewheres. And then I knowed it was all up with me.

Oh, Johnny!

Baby!

THE SAILOR

Ah, to have pavement under my feet again, instead of a motionless becalmed deck—motionless as a rock thrust up from the sea's bottom, with the very pitch starting from the seams and shrouds and canvas heavy and dead in a breathless noon. Or plunging and tacking off the bitter Horn! Icy and stiffened the gear, and cold-blisters like boils on every man's hands. But here is a stationary world: she don't pitch and groan and boom, not she! nor, scuppers under, race the howling gale.

Ah, lads, only fools go to sea—unless it be for to change women occasionally. Surely a man cannot be satisfied with one kind for ever. There's your wide-hipped Spaniard among the mandolins

in the smoky inn, your blonde Norse women, your pale cold Anglo-Saxons. And I mind one I met beneath the walls of Yemen; red haired, she was; and one in the Chinee ocean: knifed three men. And where's a man to make his final port, with all these from which to choose?

A sound footing is good, and wine and women and fighting; but soon the fighting's done and the wine is drunk and women's mouths dont taste as a man had thought, and then he'll sicken for the surge and the sound of the sea, and the salt smell of it again.

THE COBBLER

My life is a house: The smell of leather is the wall of my house. Three sides are dark, but from the other side there comes faint light through dingy unwashed windows. Beyond these windows the world grows loud and passes away. I was once a part of the world, I was once a part of the rushing river of mankind; but now I am old, I have been swirled into a still backwater in a foreign land, and the river has left me behind. That river of which I was once a part. I do not remember very well, for I am old: I have forgotten much.

Joy and sorrow—what mean these? Did I know once? But joy and sorrow are the birds which whirl screaming above the rushing flood: they do not bother about backwaters. Peace I know in setting properly a nail, in fixing cunningly a sole, and in my wife. My wife? This bush of golden roses is my wife. See, how the ancient branches are twisted and gnarled with age, as this hand is twisted and gnarled and old. Yet each year it bears me sweet bloom, though it be as old in years as I.

Ah, Tuscany! and the belled flocks among the sunny hills long after the valley itself was in shadow! and feast days and dancing on the green, and she in her scarlet kerchief, her cloudy tossing hair and her sweet wild breasts arbored amid her hair! But we were promised, you see.

She and this rose and I were young together, she and I, who were promised, and a flung rose in the dust, under the evening star. But now that rose is old in a pot, and I am old and walled about with the smell of leather, and she.... and she. . . I have known joy and sorrows, but now I do not remember. I am old: I have forgotten much.

THE LONGSHOREMAN

"She wouldn't do what I asked her to, so I socked her in the jaw . . ." Jesus, look down: see dat barrel ro-o-o-ll! White folks says, and nigger does. Load dat steamboat, load her down; O steamboat, spread white wings and fly! Streaks of sunlight cutting the wall's shadow, slide up me, barring my overalls my black hands with stripes of gold, like a jail suit. Sinners in jail, sinners in heaven, behind dem bars of gold! I got wings, you got wings, all God's chillen got wi-i-n-gs. . . . But, ah God, the light on the river, and the sun; and the night, the black night, in this heart. Oh, the black night, and the thudding drums sultry among the stars. The stars are cold, O God, and the great trees sailing like ships up the rivers of darkness, brushing the ancient stars forever aside, in vain. The earth alone is warm, heated by the dead buried in it. But the dead are cold, O lord, in the warm and the dark. Sweet chariot,

comin' fer t' cyah me home; sweet chariot! wash me whiter'n sno-o-w!

Quittin' time, whistles boomin' and moanin' like front row sinners at meetin' time. Ah God, the singing blood, the sultry blood, singing to the fierce fire in the veins of girls, singing the ancient embers into flame! White man gives me clo'se and shoes, but dat dont make no pavement love my feets. These cities are not my cities, but this dark is my dark, with all the old passions and fears and sorrows that my people have breathed into it. Let this blood sing: did I make this blood?

I got wings, you got wings; all God's chillen got w-i-i-n-g-s-s!

THE COP

When I was young, running about like a puppy or a colt, doing all the things which seemed to me grander than kings or even policemen could do (things which somebody always thought I oughtn't do) and being heartily wished dead by half the neighborhood in consequence, there was but one person in the world with whom I would have exchanged. Fellows there were who intended to be pirates, some would go west and kill Indians gallantly, blowing derisive whistle blasts at lesser adventurous mortals. But I, I would be a patrolman; in a blue coat and swinging a casual stick and with a silver shield on my breast, I would pace the streets away with the measured beat of my footsteps.

What to compare with this grandeur? To be the idol and fear of the lads, to be looked upon with respect by even grown people; to be the personification of bravery and the despair of criminals; to have a real pistol in my pocket! Later, in my adolescent years, this glamorous figure still paraded solemnly, filling my mind. I could see myself, huge and calm, negligently talking with admiring girls, being fed cake and pies and cups of coffee in snug kitchens, treading the lonely streets at night before dark houses where multitudes in slumber turn and sigh and safely dream, for I was there to guard them.

Or, foiling the murderer, shooting him dead in the spitting darkness, and sorely wounded, being nursed to health again by a beautiful girl, whom I would marry.

But now that lad is grown up. Sometimes I think he still lurks somewhere within me, reproaching me because the man has been unable to give to the lad that high desire which life has promised him. But he sleeps easily; he does not trouble me often....and what would you? life is not like that. Sometimes, pacing the dark and empty streets, he wakes and I am briefly troubled over the futile bargain a man makes when he exchanges a small body and a great heart for a large body and hardly any heart at all; but not for long. Certainly man does not ever get exactly what he wants in this world, and who can say that a wife and a home and a position in the world are not, after all, the end of every man's desire. Anyway, I prefer to believe that this creature fronting the world bravely in a blue coat and a silver shield is quite a fellow, after all.

THE BEGGER

When I was a boy I believed passionately that life was more than just eating and sleeping, that re-

stricting a man's life to one tiny speck of the earth's surface and marking his golden hours away to the stroke of a bell. What little of the world the ant can see is good to him; and I, with his vision magnified an hundred times.... what would it not be to the ant with my vision! Then multiply the limit of my sight by the size of the earth.... and there you are.

Ah, to have mounted heart and sight and sense on such a sorry nag! The knight still would ride forth, but his steed is old and not sure of foot any more; other warriors on younger and lustier stallions override and unhorse him, and now he must whine and snarl with others whose steeds have failed, over gnawed crusts without the relentless gates, in the dusty road.

THE ARTIST

A dream and a fire which I cannot control, driving me without those comfortable smooth paths of solidity and sleep which nature has decreed for man. A fire which I inherited willy-nilly, and which I must needs feed with talk and youth and the very vessel which bears the fire: the serpent which consumes its own kind, knowing that I can never give to the world that which is crying in me to be freed.

For where is that flesh, what hand holds that blood to shape this dream within me in marble or sound, on canvas or paper, and live? I, too, am but a shapeless lump of moist earth risen from pain, to laugh and strive and weep, knowing no peace until the moisture has gone out of it, and it is once more of the original and eternal dust.

But to create! Which among ye who have not this fire, can know this joy, let it be ever so fleet?

MAGDALEN

God, the light in my eyes, the sunlight flashing through the window, crashing in my poor head like last night's piano. Why didn't I close them damn shutters?

I can remember when I found days gold, but now the gold of day hurts my head. 'Tis night only is gold now, and that not often. Men aint what they used to be, or money aint, or something. Or maybe its I that aint like I was once. God knows, I try to treat 'em like thay'd want I should. I treat 'em white as any, and whiter than some... not calling no names. I'm an American girl with an American smile I am, and they know it.

There was wild blood in my veins; when I was young the blood sang like shrill horns through me. I saw women who had the bright things I wanted.... dresses and shoes and golden rings, lifting no finger to get them. And lights and sultry music, and all the bright chimaerae of the brain! And ah! my body like music, my body like flame crying for silken sheens a million worms had died to make, and that my body has died a hundred times to wear them. Yes, a thousand worms made this silk, and died; I have died a thousand deaths to wear it; and sometime a thousand worms, feeding upon this body which has betrayed me, feeding, will live.

Was there love once? I have forgotten her. Was there grief once? Yes, long ago. Ah, long ago.

THE TOURIST

—New Orleans.

A courtesan, not old and yet no longer young, who shuns the sunlight that the

illusion of her former glory be preserved. The mirrors in her house are dim and the frames are tarnished; all her house is dim and beautiful with age. She reclines gracefully upon a dull brocaded chaise-longue, there is the scent of incense about her, and her draperies are arranged in formal folds. She lives in an atmosphere of a bygone and more gracious age.

And those whom she receives are few in number, and they come to her through an eternal twilight. She does not talk much herself, yet she seems to dominate the conversation, which is low-toned but never dull, artificial but not brilliant. And those who are not of the elect must stand forever without her portals.

New Orleans. . . a courtesan whose hold is strong upon the mature, to whose charm the young must respond. And all who leave her, seeking the virgin's unbrown, ungold hair and her blanched and icy breast where no lover has died, return to her when she smiles across her languid fan. . . .

New Orleans.

Harvest-Home

By JOHN McCLURE

The moon was curving like a sickle
Against the grain, to cut it down,
When Thomas learned his love was fickle—
And Thomas, not the grain, was mown.

Gay Thomas, with the welkin crashing,
Went down like barley in his pain:
Gay Thomas saw the sickle flashing,
Gay Thomas knew the grief of grain.

Cut down when full to over flowing,
He knew the agony of wheat,
And harvest-home was bitter going
For Thomas at his sweetheart's feet.

But Thomas, stricken like the barley,
Seeing her laughter, filled his lungs
With bitter moonshine and rose squarely,
Dowered with the gift of tongues.

And every phrase was ever sour
And all harsh words were ever spoken
Gay Thomas uttered in that hour
To tell her that his heart was broken.

Two Poems

By JAMES FEIBLEMAN

Sonnet: The Telephone

Poses incorporated in the bones
  Are more sincere than artificial limbs.
  That's why such incense goes up with my hymns,
And why I can't be numbered with the drones
Who work the hardest, hoping work atones
  For hours spent in chasing phantom whims
  Along the wires. Only frankness dims
The nasal dominant in telephones.

And this reminds me of the cat I had,
  An excellent example: Baudelaire
    Gave me the idea first, I hated it
But bought one just to help along the fad;
  After awhile I missed it everywhere
    And found it on my bookshelf in a fit.

Two Epitaphs

I. ALICE BIDDLE

Here lies old Alice Biddle,
Now can death solve the riddle
Of how to hush her groans?
Not as she came she went:
God grant she rest content
Nor speak in undertones.

II. THE POET

Above my bones at rest my soul does hover,
All work of loving done, all praying over.
Here was my only chance to be alone,
Thus only could my rhymes be carved on stone.

Defense of Verse

By JOHN McCLURE

THERE have been many defenses of the literary content of poetry, briefs prepared by advocates so noble that it would be an impertinence to follow in their footsteps. The value of fiction, the therapeutic effect of "escape" and expression, all that has been established.

But I wish to defend verse. It happens that I frequently make the contention, because I believe it, that the literary (intellectual or emotional) content of poetry is inconsequential—that no particular type of idea or emotion, and no particular process of thinking or feeling is "poetic."

Poetry, for me, as one of the fine arts, is simply the beautiful music of speech—nothing more nor less than sensuous form in language.

As frequently as I make this contention, I find it necessary to defend the thesis, because romantic readers and romantic poets (I am a sentimentalist, but not a romanticist) object to it savagely. It seems that this conception of poetry, for the romanticist, destroys the dignity of the art. Mere verse is nothing at all, I am told: an empty vessel.

This contempt for "mere verse," I contend, is both foolish and baseless. It is our custom to rate man's faculty of thought as his most valuable possession. It is possible that the sense of beauty is a higher faculty, but this is not established. Language is "thought incarnate." Verse is language living with rhythm. The poet *thinks* in rhythm. A good harmony in poetry is perhaps the finest flowering of the "dance of life," for in it the faculty of thought and the sense of beauty (man's highest attributes) function in unison. The language sings— the thinking lives with inherent rhythm. In no other art is the liaison of thought and sense so immediate. The thought sings, or dances, as you will. Poetry is living music.

It is not arbitrary music, not instrumental music. The words a living body of language, sing their own song. The "instrument," speech, is itself the music.

Poetry differs from instrumental music (and it must be remembered that singing is music in which the human voice is used as an instrument) in that its harmonies are living organisms while the harmonies of instrumental music are arbitrary structures. The music of poetry is an organic attribute of the living body of language. In poetry the rhythm is not superimosed on the language, but is inherent in it. Arbitrary "meters" which do violence to the natural processes of living speech, as in ordinary bad or pedantic verse, are not poetry: they are a form of instrumental music. You must know the score—"iambic" or "trochaic" or what not—in order to make the words follow the movement.

"Yes we have no bananas" was sung a couple of years ago by millions of people. The rhythm of this atrocious song is unimaginable to one who is unfamiliar with the score. The melody is arbitrarily superimposed on the words, or the words on it, and the natural living movement of speech distorted to conform to the musical notation. But the words of poetry are their own music. Poetry—in which the mind, through language, engages in the dance of life—sings its own song, steps its own measure:

"I have loved a stream and a shadow.'
"Ladye lie neare me"
"White Horsemen, who ride on white horses, the Knights of God"
"We desolate lost ladies of Greece"
"O waly, waly, gin love be bonnie!"
"Or some lone bark buoy'd on the dense marine."
"Love is a circle that doth restless move
In the same sweet eternity of love."

Cornucopias

By MARGARET LORING THOMAS

In bright Utopias
Gay cornucopias
Spill lucious grapes of Tuscany,
Like purpled waves of sea
Drop on the amber sand
Of shores that understand.
Ripe figs in memory of Rome,
Apples..they must be picked
In orchards nearer home.

Assignation

By GORDON LAWRENCE

Not in the vehement hells of Mahomet,
Nor in the populous Inferno,
Nor in the stern Gehenna of the Jews—
They are for more tumultuous lovers.
But, ferried by the faded water-man,
Passed by Cerberus, the triune bulldog,
Under the grey trees, beside the silent river,
In a land of dying light and vague unease,
I appoint that you await me.

Poems

By CAROLINE WOGAN DURIEUX

Russian lady
your charm
filters through me
yet remains.

Your image
I recall
to dull
the sharp edges
of the day.

* * *

The years pass on
each
quietly boasting
his birth
and youth
and death
all in twelve months
and no hereafter
the years pass on
proudly

* * *

A wailing dance tune
Drifts across the street
I see small couples
Turning round and round and round
A law called Rhythm
Makes it thus and so
A law of swinging tree tops
Long black tails
We garnish with polished floors
But the dance tune
Still recalls
Those far off nights
When rocked above the earth
The wind told
things forgotten now.

Reviews

THOMAS THE LAMBKIN

(Thomas the Lambkin, by Claude Farrere. Translated from the French by Leo Ongley. E. P. Dutton and Company, 1924)

SOON after tales of adventure departed from the realms of oratory to take definite form in literature, morality and sentimental affection caught a neck-hold on these turbulent creations, and the abuse of centuries has been unable to shake the parasites loose. Few attempts have been made to relate a tale without these tinctures, it must be admitted, and the whole of adventure narrating has been relegated to absolute fiction on this account.

The history of morality in narrative can be easily traced although several volumes might be consumed in its recitation. The early narrator was outside of the restrictions of this convention for he made his hero greater than his god, inasmuch as the power of the deity had never been definitely bounded. But with the growth of stabilized religion, i.e., the Christian, the Mohammedan, the Buddhist, the narrator was outwitted by a clergy that made their god omnipotent and jealous. Therefore all heroes coming after the coming of age of religion and morality were the allies and mouthpieces of whatever deity the narrator could use familiarly. The hero no longer fought for the lust of fighting, nor lived for the glory of living. He fought for a most vague cause, contributory to church or state or some maid's fair name. A victorious tussle with temptation meant a step toward Paradise and a physical combat was only brought about by the sinning of the enemy.

Romance, handmaiden of adventure, entering the world in written form in the Third century tale of Theagines and Chariclea (usually credited to Heliodorus, but now considered to be the work of an Alexandrian Sophist) appeared with as much sentimental moralising as the market would stand. The hero of this opus would be a rather dubious character according to the standards of modern morality, but in the Third Century he must have been a marshmallow. Romance was thus debased for the sake of goodness until well after the Renaissance. Then came the grappling, in which turmoil, seldom does adventure and romance emerge without their chaperones.

In this light, the day and age of pirating has never had a fair chance in the tournament of literature. The probably most fascinating adventure of the New World has ever been so debased by moralising fictioneers and sentimental photoplay producers that the trade of the buccaneer has played second fiddle to prize fighting and stock broking in the field of interest. Pirates have only appeared to the reading class in children's books and an occasional badly written treatise in which this or that filibuster was whitewashed. The average intellectual knows that the pirate was a bloody and lewd creature only by hearsay; some writers have

gone so far as to infer that the Brothers of the Coast were known to have been guilty of murder, or robbery; the usual picture of a pirate is a flea-bitten sailor in an overgrown hat who sits on his chest and sings risqué songs.

In a recent number of The American Mercury, a writer went to indefatigable pains to prove that Captain Kidd, America's best known pirate, was a gentleman, with the character of a Y. M. C. A. secretary, who had killed but one man in his career. In other words he wanted to bring out the fact that the glorious Kidd, subject of a hundred stories, was not a pirate after all, but a fall-guy for a group of bankers. When the true story of American buccaneers yet remains to be written, it is unjust to rob them of their glory and put them on a level with Carrie Nation, and other misunderstood people of history.

From the heart of Brittany now comes a book that writes of the pirate as the pirate would want to be described. It is the story of the career of a typical filibuster, a composite of the leading Brothers of that time, a shrewd, impartial, brilliant photograph of blood and lust.

This is no book for sentimental mouthers, no book for white bellied romanticists who look for strong honest men and sweet virtuous women. The men are cruel, vicious and without principle; the women as the men. Both find a sensuous delight in the scene of battle, the sight of blood and flesh, the hoarse cry of murder-lust. They love (using that word broadly) to kill, torture, rob and rape, and Farrerè not suffering from an Anglo-Saxon squeamishness relates it all in this book... *"Tripes de Dieu,"* cries Mary Rackham, a mistress of a filibuster, and flies into the thickest of a gory battle.

Thomas, the central character, has few moral qualms regarding the life he choses. Breton superstition and an uncertain veneration for the church occasionally bear on his mind, but his lust, brutality and avidity soon outweigh his fears. He has his weak moments, but on the whole he is an outstanding figure, a courageous character, and asks nothing of life but time to swing his sabre and maul his women.

Farrerè has made no attempt to draft a plot but has spent the substance of the book in giving the life of the Lambkin. Without obviousness, he has succeeded in drawing a clear picture of his hero's psychology, although no conclusion can be drawn at the close. As a coda for this peculiar story, a cruel and sinister irony is injected that gives a sharp flavor to the story of Thomas' life.

But despite its garishness, there is a Rabelaisian humor in the book, subtile in its prominence. There are scenes that could stand in the Decameron or in the *Gesta Romanorum*.. The passage wherein Thomas, who has captured a Spanish ship after much difficulty and found an Archbishop aboard, kneels before the prelate and asks for forgiveness the while his eye is on a pretty wench in the Archbishop's party; and a moment later bears the wench to his cabin while the clergyman's back is turned, smacks of the colorful and racy tales of a past age.

The style of the book is plain and

simple without ostentation whatsoever. The author was interested in his characters, and as long as they were suitably clothed for presentation, cared not a whit if his sentences were abrupt and unmusical. In fact Farrerè seems not interested in any of the diverting sidelights of the tales; he clings to his story tenaciously, makes no comment, and appears disinterested whether Thomas is in the heat of battle or idling away in the placid streets of St. Malo.

In this vicious indifference the author doubtlessly defeats himself. The character of Thomas, admirably drawn as it is, is the type of man that can best be treated by a writer like Joseph Conrad. Thomas needs explaining now and then. His certain bursts of passion or fury while lifelike, could be interpreted by a more seasoned writer and the reader would feel much closer to the brutal, but admirable buccaneer.

But in all the volume is an entertaining one and a most valuable addition to the meagre library of pirate lore now extant. And because of the brusqueness of the style and the author's splendid knowledge of those roaring days, it is a good reference for piratical customs and idioms. It is an adventure story for educated and virile people and will go far to counterbalance the insipid and shallow stories of the Sabatinis of this literary world.

(The Reviewer has learned that distribution of the first edition has been stopped and the second edition rewritten; the more vivid passages having been omitted. This review concerns the first edition of the work).

JOHN MONTGOMERY

CHILLS AND FEVER

(*Chills and Fever, by John Crowe Ransom*). *A. A. Knopf*, 1924.

NOTHING could be more unfair to Mr. Ransom than to be reviewed by this reviewer. What I search for in poetry is the light that never was on sea or land, the fullness of serenity sometimes felt by sunset or starlight, the melting of the ice about the heart—and Mr. Ransom offers none of these. Mr. John Donne and Mr. T. S. Eliot, before whom I bow reverendly but without comprehension, arouse in him if I am not mistaken, a lively and intelligent appreciation. So my praise of Mr. Ransom's poetry is wrung from me: I admire, but unsympathetically, even grudgingly.

When a Southerner, raised on magnolias and honeysuckle and southern ideals (tenderest and noblest of ideals) and southern womanhood (purest of womanhood) and southern chivalry (knightliest of chivalry) dares to open his book of verses in this wise:

"I have a grief
(It was not stolen like a thief)
Albeit I have no bittern by the lake
To cry it up and down the brake.
. . . . . .
I will be brief,
Assuredly I have a grief,
And I am shaken; but not as a leaf."

and close it thus:

"Procne, Philomela, and Itylus,
Your names are liquid, your improbable tale
Is recited in the classic numbers of the nightingale.
Ah, but our numbers are not felicitous,
It goes not liquidly for us.
. . . . . .
Up from the darkest wood where Philomela sat,
Her fairy numbers issued. What then ailed me?
My ears are called capacious, but they failed me.

Her classics registered a little flat!
I rose, and venomously spat.

Philomela, Philomela, lover of song,
I am in despair if we may make us worthy,
A bantering breed sphistical and swarthy;
Unto more beautiful, persistently more young
Thy fabulous provinces belong."

may not Surrey of Eagle's Nest and Miss Daisy Fitzhugh Ayres arise and shudder? These Fugitives of Nashville, Tennessee, of whom Mr. Ransom is a leader, are everything that a southern writer is supposed not to be—gay, astringent, irreverent, sophisticated; craftsmen intent on their craft; with every courage except the courage to be unaware of their audience. They are the liveliest-minded, most interesting group of poets in the South, or, to my thinking, in the country.

Mr. Ransom is a gallant leader, witty, skilful, cerebral, but hiding under a mail of irony a very real, even a poignant emotion. Intellectually and technically his poetry draws me: whether or not its tang is agreeable it is wholly individual. If in his scorn of sentimentality he is sometimes precociously cynical, if in his search for the musical he is sometimes obscure, if in his avoidance of the hackneyed rhyme and cadence he is sometimes forced and bizarre, never is there a question of his intelligence, of his artistry, of his sincerity. When his joke of being clever and of shocking the reader has palled on him, I am sure he will say what is nearest his heart more directly, more movingly and very beautifully.

I will not quote the poem which furnishes the title to this, his last volume of poems, for it is already almost a classic, and those who have not read it should buy "Chills & Fever" if only only for the delight of becoming familiar with it. But nothing that I could quote would fail to reveal his quality. These two examples, typical of Mr. Ransom's manner, are for me as fascinating as they are strange:

THE TALL GIRL

The Queens of Hell had lissome necks to crane
At the tall girl approaching with long tread
And, when she was caught up even with them, nodded:
"If the young miss with gold hair might not disdain,
We would esteem her company over the plain,
To profit us all where the dogs will be out barking;
And we'll walk by the windows where the young men are working
And to-morrow we will all come home again."

But the Queen of Heaven on the other side of the road
In the likeness, I hear, of a fine motherly woman
Made a wry face, despite it was so common
To be worsted by the smooth ladies of hell,
And crisped her sweet tongue: "This never will come to good!
Just an old woman, my pet, that wishes you well."

BLACKBERRY WINTER

If the lady hath any loveliness, let it die.
For being drunken with steam of Cuban cigars,
I find no pungence in the odour of stars,
And all my music goes out of me on a sigh.

But still would I sing to my maidenly apple-tree,
Before she has borne me a single apple of red;
The pictures of silver and apples of gold are dead;
But one more apple ripeneth yet maybe.

The garnished house of the Daughter of Heaven is cold.
I have seen her often, she stood all night on the hill,
Fiercely the pale youth clambered to her, till—
Hoarsely the rooster awakened him, footing the mould.

The breath of a girl is music—fall and swell—
The trumpets convolve in the warrior's chambered ear,

But I have listened, there is no one breathing here,
And all of the wars have dwindled since Troy fell.

But still I will haunt beneath my apple-tree,
Heedful again to star-looks and wind-words,
Anxious for the flash of whether eyes or words,
And hoping a little, a little, that either be.

W. A. P.

SIXTEEN STORIES AND A THESIS

(The Short Story's Mutations, by Frances Newman.—B. W. Huebsch, 1924).

THEORIES are troublesome things. Arrayed in their abstract compactness they look attractive enough, but when the time comes for them to step forward, take their coats off and prove themselves—Ah, that is another story.

Because the theory of mutation, as expressed by de Vries, states that "species have not arisen gradually as the result of selection operating for thousands of years. They have arisen from changes that were discontinuous and sudden, however, small," is Miss Francis Newman justified in believing that the short story has arisen the same way? She prints sixteen stories to prove her point, and succeeds in proving that some stories are interesting and that others are not. She writes ten little chapters introducing these stories and proves—that she can chat cleverly, at times brilliantly, of literary figures and literary periods.

These sixteen narratives are supposed to be sixteen mutants of the short story. They cover the long period of story writing from Petronius to Paul Morand. They are heralded by the publishers as "sixteen epoch-making examples." Perhaps they are. But just what epochs they have made is not clear from Miss Newman's ten chapters of discussion. Several of them rather seem to remake the same epoch: they are unmistakably in the same genre. Some of the examples are hardly representative either of their authors' best or of the mutants they are supposed to exemplify. Chekhov's "Darling" is much less Chekhov than "La Cigale;" Lawrence's "The Shades of Spring" is only one part Lawrence—"A Sick Collier" is another and much greater part; "The Private Life" is undeniably Henry James, but why deprive it of its rightful place as a short novel?

If Miss Newman had made no claims, no hints of a thesis, had offered no epoch-making mutants, but had had the courage to select sixteen stories which she likes and offered them as such, she would have produced an interesting collection of short stories. Accepting this volume as just such a collection, we might disagree with some of her selections—as we have disagreed with some of Mr. Howells' "great American stories" and as we almost always disagree with some of Mr. O'Brien's yearly "best stories," but then in matters of taste disagreement is natural. As another collection of short stories this volume has a distinct individuality and a large amount of unusualness, even charm. It includes stories that are not ordinarily found in anthologies. petronius, Boccaccio, Voltaire, De Musset and James Joyce are not usually "proper" inclusions in American collections of short fiction. An example of Maupassant is nearly always included, but not his "Jewels." D. H. Lawrence, Sherwood Anderson, and Paul Morand are, for

most collections, too "radical" and too "new." Miss Newman has had the courage of her literary appreciations and has produced a highly readable compilation but why hang a thesis upon it?

N. BRYLLION FAGIN.

THE GREEN HAT

(The Green Hat, by Michael Arlen, Geo. H. Doran Co., N. Y., 1924).

THE reading of Michael Arlen's Romance, The Green Hat, is not easily accomplished, certainly not in two or more sessions, and if an intriguing quality were eliminated, I for one would not have reached the concluding chapter. Mr. Arlen enjoys his vocabulary, seeking for a picturesque quality of phrase and simile that often leads him into a discursiveness disastrous to his narrative, as though his route is that of a motor car which, being subject to traffic rules, must considerably increase its mileage to arrive at its destination.

The Green Hat is a character study of Iris March, otherwise the plot is meagre and the few remaining characters accessories. The story tells of a beautiful woman who in girlhood having been thwarted in marriage to the man of her choice, later marries a young cad who commits suicide on the marriage night after the nuptials. She sacrifices her good name to screen his and though she has other matrimonial ventures she is released to a freedom to carry on under a rather sexually complicated and an embittered personality, henceforth she is, as it were, "posted," a property most seductive to the male hunter, but eschewed by the wives. From the start we are aware of a fatality Iris March cannot sidestep, borne out by a climax in which the repeated sacrifice ends in death. Iris March is of a nature to evade no issue in which she has acted as an agent, also possessing the sportsmanship to eliminate herself, in a crisis hurtful to the object of her affection. She played hard and she loved hard—sometimes loose—; her actions not always to be condoned, yet it would have been a difficult matter, once having met her, to let it go at that. As she is described by Michael Arlen one may well sympathize with the lonely seat at the steering wheel of the primrose car that waited all night in front of the house in a place called Shepherd's Market.

G. T. S.

EBURY STREET

(Conversations in Ebury Street, by George Moore: T. Werner Laurie, London; Boni Liveright, New York City).

THERE are moments when one does not think of girls, are there not, dear reader?" Mr. George Moore, for some quaint reason, never did quite say. But in thinking over the beautiful and unexpurgated English edition of his books, in which he has managed to cage so many delightful indiscretions, one feels that Mr. Beerbohm when he put the words into his mouth was doing another of these exquisitely correct little things for which he is so justly famous. Not that one would like to demolish the George Moore legend (it has all the conscious wickedness of the best

fin de siecle circles) by intimating that Mr. Moore has ever really committed indiscretions. One instinctively feels that he has been far too busy writing memoirs, confessions and avowals to have had time for them. But it was *chic* to say one had; and with a sage twinkle in that wise old eye, he has told many a shocking tale, the twinkle deepening to malice as he thinks of the fictional character he is building for posterity to bowdlerize. One recalls that Lady Gregory, in her charming Irish way, once said: "Some men kiss, but do not tell; George Moore does not kiss, but he tells."

But there is nothing of all this in *Conversations in Ebury Street;* instead it is one of those rare moments when Mr. Moore does not, as one would so like to quote him, think of girls. It was designed primarily to take the place of *Impressions and Opinions* (which Mr. Moore has never liked) in the American edition of his works. The style is now Mr. Moore at his exquisite best, but something perhaps of that uncompromising personality that tossed such gallant bombs into the critical world of the Nineties has been lost on the long road between. Or it may be that it only seems so. If Mr. Moore's critical manners, which once made London shudder from Piccadilly to South Kensington, seem a shade less revolutionary than they did in those long ago days when Mr. Ruskin was still fulminating and Oscar Wilde was diverting the London salons with theories of Art picked up in Parisian studios, it does not augur that they have improved; perhaps it is only that his young contemporaries have grown so much worse.

One notes that he still slightly raises his voice and goes blandly on when Mr. Husband, Mr. de la Mare, Mr. Gosse or Mr. John Freeman protests; and there is, there must be those among his friends who would point to *Conversations in Ebury Street* and (with a peculiar meanin gin their inverted commas) say: It is the lot of all critics to be remembered by what they failed to understand: Sainte Beuve's failure to appreciate Balzac's genius will assure him of the sneers of many a generation and the pot of paint flung in the face of the public will survive Ruskin's finest prose passage. But there is still worse to be said of Mr. Moore nowadays. It scarcely seems good taste to a generation that sends flowers to the living (for the simple reason that the living can return them) for Mr. Moore to continue sending them to the dead. So he seems fated never to come into his own. In the days when *Impressions and Opinions* was new, his world really could not be expected to condone that shocking Verlaine, nor could it believe that Balzac, of whom they had never heard anything except that he wrote eighteen hours a day (and one knew that artists worked by inspiration and not by clock) had ever written anything worth while. And now in a critical world that is young when he is old, Balzac and Verlaine, translated but not read, are subjects to be listened to with courteous (but one fears, rather bored) attention.

But he has, he has always had, a quiet indifference to opinion; and one seems to see him oftenest as a little boy

wandering down the street whistling gleefully in defiance of time and tune. Monet may have taught it to him when he told him to be ashamed of nothing except being ashamed; or it may have been latent in his nature all along, since he once told an American gentleman at Baireuth that self-confidence is synonymous with genius. Whatever it is, he goes maliciously on, polishing his prose style with *Marius the Epicurean* and *Imaginary Portraits* on the pedestal before him, and it will make little difference to him that a Mr. Cabell says he is not a good writer because he has not a good vocabulary. Perhaps he will think (if ever he sees it) that Mr. Cabell should know; any number of quite well educated people have gone through life under the impression that Mr. Cabell's books are full of misprints, simply because a large portion of the words could not be found in any portable dictionary.

As one might expect, he pokes deft fun at that last of the Victorians, Mr. Thomas Hardy. One has felt for some time that the author of *Jude* (which shocked so many estimable people in the middle Nineties), *Tess* and all the other fat novels which he ceased to write thirty years ago, has taken quite seriously to press notices which an assiduous clipping bureau must have forwarded him so frequently in the years between. But Mr. Moore has said the last, the perfect word on the subject: "I would think only of how he may be saved from invidious familiarity when he advances to meet our God, for never having known him on earth he may, when he steps from Charon's boat, ask the God to point out his (Mr. Hardy's) seat to him; or it may be that he will seek his seat himself, and not finding it next to Shakespeare or Æschylus, he will return and complain to Apollo, who will ask: Who is this one? A messenger will answer: This is Hardy, the author of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*.. And the author of these absurd works, the God will reply, would place himself next to Æschylus and Shakespeare? A messenger will answer: He has listened long to the quackers that beset the shallows of mortality...." Leaving Mr. Hardy (or did Mr. Hardy leave himself?) far from the madding crowd, he takes a fling at George Eliot and into the picutre with her walks John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, Harriet Martineau and (it was inevitable) George Henry Lewes. The three phthisis-stricken Brontës, living on a Yorkshire moor, still make excellent copy and there is something delicately outrageous in his theory that Charlotte (besides having discovered bigamy and writing it out all by herself) plagiarized her dead sister Anne.

But perhaps one likes him best when he is least purposeful. There is something singularly attractive in a man who has shaken hands with Turgenev, called on Zola, drunk absinthe with Verlaine and built as his monument the stately Carra Edition, talking idly in the warm days of 1923 about a delightful *surtout* (the mirror a little dim and worn in places, but the rich gilding on the chased fame in fine condition) that he did not buy in Paris once long ago. His purple architecture of Aubusson, his grey mullet, his Barsac his own, his inimitable rag-and-bone shops seem just a trifle more delect-

able than any one has ever known oneself. Perhaps this is because in his own words, he has gone through life avoiding burdens, and perhaps underneath it all is some of that fugitive charm of inconsistency which makes a man whose title-deed to immortality was written in the dry, bleak prose of *Ester Waters*, fight valiant battles for "heat" in literature.

But there it is. Like another famous conversationalist by the seashore, he talks of many things; and if he sometimes offer his propensities where one had been led to expect ideas, they are always interesting and fresh, while ideas have been old since time began.

HELEN MELTON.

Advice

By LE BARON COOKE

Let us guard the memory
Of this bacchanalian moment,
Beloved,
Lest the wolf of madness
Prey upon us
In the gray New England years
To follow ....